



# VENA Skills Checklist for Effective Client-Centered Counseling

## Skills Checklist

Rate counselor on a scale of 1 to 5 on how well each skill was performed.

1 = Needs significant practice. 5 = Excellent, keep up the great work!

	1	2	3	4	5	Comments
<b>Establishing Rapport</b>						
Made eye contact (when culturally appropriate)						
Displayed respect for other cultures & used translator appropriately						
Offered help when needed ("here are some books," "feed baby here")						
Avoided inappropriate non-verbal communication (head down doing paperwork while client was speaking, rolling eyes at loud children)						
Ensured privacy (kept voice low, closed door, moved to private location)						
<b>Completing Assessment Forms</b>						
Reviewed client's past history						
Collected missing information on WIC forms without interrupting client						
Asked probing questions to clarify responses						
Avoided spending extensive time on irrelevant information						
Shared findings (Ht/Wt/Iron) in a non-judgmental manner						
<b>Identifying and Exploring Concerns</b>						
Asked open-ended questions to determine client's concerns						
Identified and acknowledged client's strengths						
Utilized conversation starters & agenda setting tools if needed						
Maintained focus on main nutrition issue; validated other issues						
If nothing was offered by participant, attempted to lead discussion based on nutritional risk while maintaining rapport						
Helped client explore feelings and attitudes about main health concern						
Assessed the client's readiness to change (importance, confidence)						
Collaborated with client to clarify problems & identify strengths/solutions						
Provided simple, accurate nutrition messages if client was receptive						
Referred client to outside sources if needed (social work, food bank...)						
Gave tailored messages/pamphlets based on feedback from client						
<b>Setting Goal</b>						
Summarized the conversation						
Worked with client to create solutions using client's ideas/language						
Helped client make goal(s) specific & realistic for the family's lifestyle						
Documented goal(s) in VENA family documentation tool for follow up						
<b>Closing on Positive Note</b>						
Restated the goal						
Expressed appreciation for client's time						
Was enthusiastic about following up next time						
Completed VENA documentation tool						
<b>General Skills</b>						
<b>Active Listening &amp; Collaboration</b>						
Allowed client to speak at least 50% of session						
Paraphrased what was heard instead of simply parroting back						
Asked questions to clarify what was heard when needed						
<b>Encouragement</b>						
Provided validation and affirmation						
Used appropriate non-verbal communication (nodding of head)						
Used respectful language						